

Misbaah Al - Hedaya

Abstract: *In this article we introduce Ayatollah Beh'bahāni, the author of misbaah al -hedaya . His book is set in forty chapter in every chapter a Quranic verse on the subject of imamate has been discussed. The Sunni and Shiite traditions, along with the reliable sources such as Ghayh Almram have been investigated.*

About the Author

1. An introduction about Behbahān town

Behbahān is an ancient town located in southern part of Iran. In the old times it was recognized as a village to the city "Arjān". In the long history, after accidents and events, "Arjān" disappeared; but Behbahān survived and changed in to a growing town.

During the last 11 centuries, as the histories show, many scholars have lived in Behbahān.

Nasser Khosrow, the famous Iranian scholar, who lived about nine centuries ago, has mentioned about his visit from Behbahān in 444 A.H. (about 1020 A.D.) in his history.

2. His Social and cultural activities

The late Ayatollah Beh'bahāni, during his long staying in the towns Behbahān, Rāmormoz, Ahwāz, and Esfahān provided a lot of services to people. Some of them are as follow:

- 1-Buliding of more than 50 mosques and Hossiniya (holy places for practice and performance of religious activities),
- 2-Establishment of Islamic schools in yasouj and Ahwāz,
- 3-Establishment of the large library of "Dārul Elm" in Ahwāz,
- 4-Establishment of primary and high school for the girls in Ahwāz,
- 5-Establishment of an Islamic propagatory institution in Ahwāz;

6-Building of Mosques and public bathes in esfahan;

7-Building of a polyclinic in AhmadAbad district of Esfahān;

8-Pronding first aids to the flood victims in Khuzistan (1961), and Esfahan (1973), and assisting them in re-building their homes.

9-Publish of the old Islamic books; especially the works of Ayatollah Shaikh Hadi Tehrani, who was the prominent Professor of the teachers of the late Behbahāni. Some of those published books were:

-al-Tawhid,

-Zakhā'yer al-Nabow'wah,

-Vadāye al-Nabow'wah,

-Al-Rizwan (Paradise)

-Al-Soum (Fasting)

10-Public preaches for the common people.

3. Education

By the order of the grand scholar Ayatollah Tabātabāei Qummi to Ayatollah Behbahāni, during his staying in Karbalā, he began to teach the Islamic courses. He taught the Islamic courses in different cities of Behbahān, Ramhormoz, Ahwāz, and Esfahān for more than 70 years. Some of his prominent students during that period were shaikh Muhammad Reza Esfahani, Seyed Ismāel Hāshemi, Shaikh M.H. Mazaheri, Seyed Abdul Qasem Hashemi, Muhammad Jawad Tara, Seyed Ali Fāni, Seyed Muhammad Jazayeri, Ali Dawani, Seyed Abdullah Mousawi (his son); Seyed M. Reza Shafiei, and Shaikh Ali Muhammad Ibn Elm.

Some of his students completed and published the collections of the lessons of their teacher. Seyed Ali Shafiei published the book "Badāye al-Osoul", which was the collection of the lessons of jurisprudence course of Ayatollah Beh'bahāni.

4. Publications

During the tens of years of study, research, and scientific activity, Ayatollah Beh'bahāni wrote useful books in the fields of literature, jurisprudence, and Islamic thoughts. All those books have been published by the good efforts of his sons and grandsons, in "Darul Elm of ayatollah Behbahāni" in Ahwāz and Qom. Some of them are:

- 1-Tawhidul Fāeq fi Marefatul Khāleq,
- 2-al-Eshteqāq,
- 3-Kashful Astār,
- 4-Asasul Nahv,
- 5-Maqālāt fi Osoul-e-Fiqh,
- 6-Qawāyed-al-Kolliya (general principles),
- 7-Mesbahul Hedaya fi Ethbātul welāya,
- 8-Forty Questions and answers,
- 9-Complementary comments on the book "Orwatul Voth'qā",
- 10-The Practice of Hajj,
- 11-Jāme al-Masāyel (religious teachings for the followers).

5. About the book Misbahah Hedaya

Ayatollah Behbahāni wrote a book about the divine leadership (Imamate), in his trip to Karbalā, during 1364 A.H. (1940), and named it "Misbahah Hedāya".

He ordered the book, according to an Islamic practice, in 40 chapters. In every of those chapters, a Qur'anic verse which is related to the subject of "Imamate", and Divine leadership" is explained. Then Islamic traditions, from the infallible leaders, quoted by the scholars of both Shia and Sunni groups, have been added. The characteristics of the book are as below:

1-It is a kind of subject-oriented book of commentary of Qur'an. The main subject in the discussed verses is Divine leadership or Imamate.

2-It is a kind of "40 traditions" book. Many of the Muslim scholars have written similar books, which contain 40 traditions related from the holy Prophet and/ or infallible leaders. "Mesbahul Hedaya" is a "40 traditions" book dedicated to the subject of Imamate.

3-Detailed explanation about the topic tradition in every chapter, by using other traditions.

4-Application of the traditions narrated in both Shia and Sunni sources and references.

5-Detailed explanations about every topic tradition by the application of the Islamic science, so that the important points and characteristics of them are revealed.

6-A comparative study and review of the views of different Muslim scholars and sects, by observing the principles of a scientific comparative study, i.e. accuracy, politeness, and reasoning in criticize.

7-Application of the other Qur'anic verses, in order to explain the topic verse in every chapter, and to review the viewpoints of other Muslim writers.

8-A correct classification of the subjects, which indicates the familiarity of the writer to other fields of religious studies.

9-Showing the correlation of the coherent central 40 verses, so that the aware readers will clearly find out that every of those verses were related and clearly indicating about an aspect, or(aspects), of the subject of Imamate.

10-Frequent application and usage of the great book of "Ghāyatul Marām" written by the highly respected Shia writer, Seyed Hashem Bahrāni, who compiled his book in 460 chapters, and had collected more than 4500 traditions in the field of Imamate, from both Shia and Sunni sources and references.

11-Preparation of scientific responses to those who had confirmed and certified the correctness of the traditions about the virtues of Amirul Momenin Ali (p.b.u.h.); but do not consider them indicative and enough about his appointment as "the divine leader" and "Imam".

12-Making references to the Arabic literature of the Islamic period, during the discussions.

13-Application of the ancient Shia and Sunni commentary books of Qur'an ,such as "Majma'ul Bayan" (written by Ali Tabarsi), Kabir (written by Fakhr-e-Rāzi), and Kash'shāf (by Zamakh'shari); and discussing their contents, which reveals the knowledge of the author-Ayatollah Behbahāni- over the Qur'anic subjects.

14-Providing different historical discussions by application of the work of the popular Sunni writer Ibn Qutaiba Dinwari, i.e. the book, "al-Imamate wal Siyasat" and evaluating its contents.

A correct and fluent text, which has regarded all the Arabic grammatical points, has resulted in attention and admiration of the Arab people. The above characteristics caused to frequent prints and publications of this book in Tehran, Qum, Esfahān, and Cairo. (Qairo. Najah Publications, 1976). For the same reasons, the respected writer was very careful about this book, in comparison to his other works. Even once

it was translated in to Persian language by Seyed M.R. Shafiei (in the name Meftāhul Enāya); again the author encouraged another student, Mr. Ali Dawani, to translate it in to Persian. This new translation (Mesbāhul Hedāya) is published several times. This book is also translated and published in to Urdu language. Altogether, we can say that it might serve as a reference book in the fields of interpretation, traditions, theology, history, etc for the Muslim students, and those who would like to learn more about the Islamic issues. about 40 verses used in this book.